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UNCLAS MONROVIA 000547

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DRL AND AF/W

E.O.12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KWMN](#) [KCRM](#) [KDEM](#) [LI](#)

SUBJECT: LIBERIA: SECURITY SITUATION STABLE; NO TARGETING OF  
EX-COMBATANTS

REF: 07 MONROVIA 0544

[¶1.](#) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE PARAGRAPH 7.

[¶2.](#) SUMMARY. Embassy requests that DRL transmit this information to Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The security situation in Liberia continues to improve and post has received no reports that individuals are being attacked or harmed for previous affiliation with any of the warring factions. Several former warlords serve in the Legislature. Crime remains a problem with theft and rape being the two most highly reported crimes in Liberia. UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has ended its disarmament program after successfully returning over 100,000 ex-combatants into society. Other international human rights organizations have not reported any systematic or widespread abuses since the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2003. End summary.

[¶3.](#) In January 2006, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was inaugurated as the President of Liberia after two rounds of free and fair elections were conducted in October and November 2005. There was no violence during or after the elections, though supporters of the opposition candidate peacefully protested the results. According to the various national and international elections observer missions, there were no reports that constituents were intimidated or coerced into voting for any of the elected officials. Several by-elections have been held since 2005 to replace legislators who leave office and no violence or threats have been reported during any by-election. In addition, 64 members of the House of Representatives and 30 members of the Senate were also elected in October 2005. This group of legislators included former members or leaders of warring factions and persons on the UN travel ban and assets freeze list. There were no protests associated with the election of former warlords. Embassy staff attend legislative sessions every week and have noticed that many of the legislators from opposing warring factions are now working together, forming alliances on specific legislation or other legislative issues.

[¶4.](#) The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) officially ended its Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation (DDRR) program in July 2009. Since the program began in 2006, the DDRR program registered and disarmed approximately 102,000 ex-combatants, including around 11,000 children. The ex-combatants were trained, reintegrated and returned to live in society. UNMIL reports that about 40 percent chose formal education, 49 percent chose vocational skills training, seven percent driver training, and four percent agricultural training. UNMIL operated 15 rehabilitation and reintegration projects, separate from those sponsored by USAID or the European Union. There are no longer any large concentrations or camps of ex-combatants, nor are there any remaining internally displaced refugee camps in Liberia.

[¶5.](#) There are ex-combatants and other young people who engage in criminal activity due to poverty and lack of employment or educational opportunities. The most frequently reported crimes are theft, rape, and simple assault. Embassy officers attend weekly human rights meetings with a number of local and international human rights NGOs who have monitors in the interior of the country as well as in Monrovia. There have been no reports in the weekly human rights meetings of systematic or widespread harm to individuals based on affiliation or alignment with former warring factions. Embassy officers also have close contact with UN agencies and other NGOs in the interior of the country. There have been no reports from any of these agencies that individuals have been targeted for past

affiliations. There have been no reports in newspapers or other news sources that individuals have been targeted for past affiliations with warring factions. UNMIL monitors Liberia's human rights situation through its Human Rights and Protection Section.

¶6. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 2006 to promote justice and reconciliation in Liberia. The TRC has collected approximately 20,000 statements from Liberians around the country regarding their experiences during the war. The TRC held a convention in June 2009 with delegates from every county and many civil society groups to solicit input on the report. Several ex-warlords attended the convention as delegates, including Alhaji Kromah. An "unedited" version of the report was released on June 30, 2009. This version is complete in terms of content; final editing for formatting should be complete by August 31, 2009.

¶7. ACTION REQUEST. DHS has requested updated information on the security situation as it relates to human rights violations to assist with Liberian immigration cases, specifically those involving Liberian asylum seekers. Post requests that DRL pass the above information to DHS officers for use in adjudication of immigration cases and in immigration court.

THOMAS-GREENFIELD